

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /031 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1602

S E C R E T BONN 05552

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GW, UR, WB

SUBJECT: SOVIET DIPLOMAT'S COMMENT ON BERLIN

SUMMARY: SOVIET POLITICAL COUNSELOR IN BONN TOLD EMBOFF APRIL 4 THAT SOVIET SIDE WAS STILL CONCERNED ABOUT FEDERAL PRESENCE IN WEST BERLIN EVEN AFTER SECRETARY KISSINGER'S DISCUSSIONS OF MATTER IN MOSCOW. SOVIETS THOUGHT FOUR-POWER CONSULTATIONS MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO RESOLVE PROBLEM. SOVIET REP SUGGESTED "PERSONALLY AND INFORMALLY" POSSIBLE WAY OUT OF PRESENT DIFFICULTIES, HOWEVER, WHICH HE THOUGHT WE MIGHT CONSIDER. HE STRESSED SOVIET INTEREST IN AVOIDING CONFRONTATION OVER BERLIN BUT WARNED FRANKLY THAT BERLIN ISSUES WOULD NEVER ENTIRELY DISSAPPEAR SINCE THEY REPRESENTED USEFUL SOVIET LEVER FOR BLOCKING CLOSER FRG-GDR COOPERATION. END SUMMARY.

1. AT LUNCH WITH EMBOFF APRIL 4, SOVIET POLITICAL COUNSELOR DISCUSSED BERLIN ISSUES. WHILE PROFESSING NOT TO KNOW DETAILS OF SECRETARY'S TALKS ON BERLIN WITH GROMYKO IN MOSCOW, SOVIET REP DISPLAYED FULL GRASP OF GENERAL OUTLINE OF SOVIET POSITION. HE SAID HE THOUGHT FOUR-POWER CONSULTATION ON FEDERAL PRESENCE WAS NECESSARY IN ORDER TO BRING HOME TO FEDERAL GOVERNMENT THE DANGERS INVOLVED IN BUILDING UP THE FEDERAL

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PRESENCE BEYOND ITS PRESENT LEVEL. HE COMMENTED THAT

CONSULTATIONS WOULD ONLY MAKE SENSE, HOWEVER, IF PROPERLY PREPARED AHEAD OF TIME TO PRODUCE POSITIVE RESULTS.

2. US REP SAID HE THOUGHT US SIDE SAW LITTLE NEED FOR CONSULTATIONS IF SOVIETS TOOK INTO ACCOUNT SECRETARY'S COMMENTS IN MOSCOW RE FEDERAL PRESENCE. US REP ADDED THAT HE WONDERED IF USSR WAS PREPARED FOR STRAINS IN FRG-SOVIET RELATIONS THAT WOULD RESULT FROM FURTHER DIFFICULTIES OVER BERLIN. HE ALSO NOTED THAT IF BRANDT WERE REALLY GOING TO MOSCOW THIS SUMMER, IT SEEMED A STRANGE MOVE TACTICALLY ON SOVIET PART TO CREATE A DOMESTIC POLITICAL PROBLEM FOR THE CHANCELLOR ON A BERLIN ISSUE.

3. SOVIET REP SAID THE USSR WAS AWARE OF THIS ASPECT OF THE PROBLEM. HE THEN LAUNCHED OFF INTO WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS AN INFORMAL AND PERSONAL THOUGHT FOR SETTLING THE FEDERAL PRESENCE PROBLEM THAT MIGHT AVOID SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES. HE THOUGHT THE FRG COULD GO AHEAD AND SET UP THE FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCY IN BERLIN AS PLANNED: THE SOVIETS AND GDR WOULD PROTEST PUBLICLY AGAINST THIS VIOLATION OF THE BERLIN AGREEMENT AND THREATS WOULD BE MADE THAT NO AGENCY EMPLOYEES WOULD BE ALLOWED TO USE THE TRANSIT ROUTES: THE ALLIES IN TURN COULD PROTEST AGAINST THE SOVIET/GDR THREATS AGAINST THE AGREEMENT. THEREAFTER, NO PRACTICAL STEPS WOULD BE TAKEN BY THE SOVIETS OR GDR ACTUALLY TO HINDER FEA EMPLOYEES; THEY WOULD BE ALLOWED TO PROCEED WITHOUT DIFFICULTIES ON THE ACCESS ROUTES. HOWEVER, THE USSR WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MAKE ITS POINT OF PRINCIPLE, PARTLY TO SAVE FACE ON THE SOVIET SIDE (THE SOVIET REP AGAIN STRESSED GROMYKO'S PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT IN THIS ISSUE--SEE BONN 2379) AND PARTLY TO SHOW ITS ALLIES THAT IT HAS REACTED. THE USSR WOULD THEN EXPECT THAT NO FURTHER BUILDUP IN THE FEDERAL PRESENCE WOULD TAKE PLACE.

4. US REP SAID SUCH A PROPOSAL, IF MADE, WOULD BE FAR-REACHING, ESPECIALLY SINCE SOVIET WAS SUGGESTING THAT NO FURTHER ENHANCEMENT IN FEDERAL PRESENCE WAS PERMISSIBLE: THIS WAS NOT THE US VIEW. US REP ASKED HOW GDR WOULD REACT TO NOISE BUT NO ACTION ON FEA EMPLOYEES.

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SOVIET RESPONDED EMPHATICALLY THAT THE GDR WAS NOT RPT NOT INVOLVED IN THIS FEDERAL PRESENCE QUESTION: IT WAS ENTIRELY A SOVIET AFFAIR. HE WENT ON TO STATE IN FRANK TERMS THAT, FOR THE SOVIETS, BERLIN PROBLEMS WERE ALWAYS USEFUL AND WOULD CONTINUE TO BE, FOR THEY REPRESENTED THE MAJOR BLOCK TO CLOSER FRG-GDR COOPERATION, TO WHICH MOST CIRCLES IN MOSCOW WERE OPPOSED. THE SOVIETS WANTED LEVERAGE IN GERMANY, AND

BERLIN PROVIDED THE MOST USEFUL HANDLE. SOVIET REP  
SAID THAT HE PERSONALLY THOUGHT THIS OUTLOOK IN MOSCOW  
SHORT-SIGHTED BUT IT WAS ONE THAT FOUND WIDE-SPREAD  
SUPPORT.

5. COMMENT: WE HAVE REPORTED THE ABOVE IN SOME DETAIL  
FOR IT STRIKES US THAT IT MAY SUGGEST THE UNDERLYING  
APPROACH THAT GROMYKO MAY TAKE IN HIS TALKS WITH THE  
SECRETARY, AND THE UK, FRENCH AND FRG FOREIGN MINISTERS  
IN NEW YORK NEXT WEEK.

6. OUR OWN VIEW IS THAT, APART FROM ATTEMPTING TO  
OBTAIN FIRM WESTERN COMMITMENT THAT NOTHING FURTHER IN  
THE FEDERAL PRESENCE FIELD WILL TAKE PLACE IN BERLIN  
(BEYOND THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY), THE SUGGESTED SOVIET  
APPROACH, IF MADE, MAY HAVE PRACTICAL POSSIBILITIES.  
IT WOULD PROVIDE PRESUMABLY FOR THE AGENCY'S ESTABLISH-  
MENT, FOR NO REAL TROUBLES FOR THE TRAVEL OF ITS  
EMPLOYEES BETWEEN WEST BERLIN AND THE FRG, FOR ALLIED  
AND SOVIET STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD, AND FOR NO  
QUADRIPARTITE CONSULTATIONS ON FEDERAL PRESENCE.  
HILLENBRAND

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, BERLIN QUADRIpartite MATTERS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 05 APR 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1974BONN05552  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D740077-0193  
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**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Office:** ACTION SS  
**Original Classification:** SECRET  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** SECRET  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 07 MAY 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <07 MAY 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <26 FEB 2003 by GolinoFR>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SOVIET DIPLOMAT'S COMMENT ON BERLIN SUMMARY: SOVIET POLITICAL COUNSELOR IN BONN TOLD  
**TAGS:** PFOR, GE, UR, WB, (KISSINGER, HENRY A)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005